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TO THE MEMBERS OF THE FORTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE:

On February 7th I submitted to you a message in which I recommended that a Committee to be composed of the Chairman of the Committee on Penitentiaries in the House, and the Chairman of the Committee on Penitentiaries in the Senate, together with six business men, two to be selected by the Lieutenant Governor, two by the Speaker of the House and two by the Governor, be appointed. Said Committee to make an inquiry into the business methods being used by the Prison System of the State, the object being to ascertain whether or not the Prison System could be operated on a better business basis. I suggested the method above referred to of naming the Committee in order to avoid any question of politics and I recommended the inclusion on the Committee of the Chairman of the Committee on Penitentiaries both in the House and the Senate so that they as Representatives of the Legislature might be in a position to direct any legislation which the Committee as a whole might determine to be desirable.

The fact is that the Prison System of Texas is costing taxpayers about One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000.00) per annum. It seems to me that with the tremendous investment which the State has in Prison Property that this system should be made self-sustaining, but I stated frankly in my message to the Legislature that I did not have the detailed information which in my judgment was necessary to enable me to make recommendations on improvement of the prison management to the end that maximum efficiency might be obtained. To me it seems preposterous that an organization owning approximately 73,148 acres of land, with millions of dollars worth of buildings and machinery and equipment, and livestock, all paid for and no interest or taxes to pay, and in addition to that approximately 7,000 men working for no wages except their board and room and clothes, should show a loss instead of making a profit. With an organization like this any wide-awake business man would expect to make an enormous profit each year, yet the State is operating this organization at a loss of over \$11,000,000.00 during the past ten years, or an average yearly loss of over one million dollars.

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To make the proposition look still more preposterous, the state which owns this institution, meaning the Prison System, also owns some eleemosynary institutions and schools and other institutions which use millions of dollars worth of food and clothes and manufactured articles which might just as well be grown and manufactured in the Prison System, giving a market for the products that could be made by these 7,000 men.

Although the Prison System now markets to the outside world, the products raised on its farms, in competition with the products raised by our Texas farmers, yet I would not advocate marketing manufactured goods made by Prison labor in competition with manufactured articles made by free labor outside the prison, but our State Government which owns the Prison certainly should manufacture in the prison most everything which it is now buying outside, and thus save thousands of dollars, and put the Prison System on a paying basis, instead of on a losing basis of over one million dollars per year.

It was my thought that a Committee of six outstanding business men, each selected from a different line of business, would be able to make recommendations to the Legislature and to the Governor which would result in saving at least a part of this million dollars annually of the taxpayers' money which we are spending. House Concurrent Resolution No. 32 which I have before me, makes no provision for the appointment of such a Committee. It is therefore returned to you with my disapproval.

Respectfully submitted,


Governor.

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